

## Request for Proposal (RFP)

Subject RFP #:	RFP-CATALYZE-Edu-2023-0102
RFP Issue Date:	8/21/2023
Project	CATALYZE Innovative Blended Finance
The Company	Palladium International, LLC
Country of Performance	Global
Closing Date and Time	September 11, 2023
Questions Deadline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted at <a href="mailto:catalyze procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com">catalyze procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com</a> by 28 August 2023 at 5:00pm EST. <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Bidders' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Details for Submission	Submissions will be accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronically: email to <a href="mailto:catalyze procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com">catalyze procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com</a> <input type="checkbox"/> In hard copy (sealed bids)
Offer Validity Period	60 days

Thank you for your interest in the above procurement. As implementer for the CATALYZE Innovative Blended Finance Project funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Palladium invites you to submit a proposal for the scope of work attached in Annex A. Your proposal must be valid for the Validity Period.

Please email your notice of intention to submit a proposal by the Questions Deadline. Answers to questions shall be distributed to all offerors that have indicated an intention to submit a proposal by the deadline.

Please submit your proposal in accordance with the Details for Submission above by the Closing Date and Time. This RFP in no way obligates Palladium to award a contract nor does it commit Palladium to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. Palladium bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Yours sincerely,

CATALYZE Procurement Team

## Terms and conditions

### 1. Proposal Conditions

By submitting a proposal, potential suppliers are bound by these terms and conditions. Potential suppliers must submit offers with all details provided in English and with prices quoted in a single currency.

### 2. Proposal Lodgement

The Company may grant extensions to the Closing Time at its discretion. The Company will not consider any quotes received after the Closing Time specified in the RFP unless the Company determines to do so otherwise at its sole discretion.

### 3. Evaluation

The Company may review all proposal to confirm compliance with this RFP and to determine the best proposal in the circumstances.

### 4. Alterations

The Company may decline to consider a proposal in which there are alterations, erasures, illegibility, ambiguity or incomplete details.

### 5. The Company's Rights

The Company may, at its discretion, discontinue the RFP; decline to accept any proposal; terminate, extend or vary its selection process; decline to issue any contract; seek information or negotiate with any potential supplier that has not been invited to submit a proposal; satisfy its requirement separately from the RFP process; terminate negotiations at any time and commence negotiations with any other potential supplier; evaluate proposals as the Company sees appropriate (including with reference to information provided by the prospective supplier or from a third party); and negotiate with any one or more potential suppliers.

### 6. Amendments and Queries

The Company may amend, or clarify any aspect of the RFP prior to the RFP Closing Time by issuing an amendment to the RFP in the same manner as the original RFP was distributed. Such amendments or clarifications will, as far as is practicable be issued simultaneously to all parties.

Any queries regarding this RFP should be directed to the Contact Person identified on the cover page of this RFP.

### 7. Clarification

The Company may, at any time prior to execution of a contract, seek clarification or additional information from, and enter into discussions and negotiations with, any or all potential suppliers in relation to their proposals. In doing so, the Company will not allow any potential supplier to substantially tailor or amend their proposal.

### 8. Confidentiality

In their proposal, potential suppliers must identify any aspects of their proposal that they consider should be kept confidential, with reasons. Potential suppliers should note that the Company will only agree to treat information as confidential in cases that it considers appropriate. In the absence of such an agreement, potential suppliers acknowledge that the Company has the right to disclose the information contained in their proposal.

The potential supplier acknowledges that in the course of this RFP, it may become acquainted with or have access to the Company's Confidential Information (including the existence and terms of this RFP and the TOR). It agrees to maintain the confidence of the Confidential Information and to prevent its unauthorised disclosure to any other person. If the potential supplier is required to disclose Confidential Information due to a relevant law or legal proceedings, it will provide reasonable notice of such disclosure to the Company. The parties agree that this obligation applies during the RFP and after the completion of the process.

### 9. Alternatives

Potential suppliers may submit proposals for alternative methods of addressing the Company's requirement described in the RFP where the option to do so was stated in the RFP or agreed in writing with the Company prior to the RFP Closing Time. Potential suppliers are responsible for providing a sufficient level of detail about the alternative solution to enable its evaluation.

### 10. Reference Material

If the RFP references any other materials including, but not limited to, reports, plans, drawings, samples or other reference material, the potential supplier is responsible for obtaining the referenced material and considering it in framing their proposal. And provide it to the Company upon request.

### 11. Price/Cost Basis

Prices or costs quoted must show the tax exclusive price, the tax component and the tax inclusive price.

The contract price, which must include any and all taxes, supplier charges and costs, will be the maximum price payable by the Company for the Goods and/or Services.

### 12. Financial information

If requested by the Company, potential suppliers must be able to demonstrate their financial stability and ability to remain viable as a provider of the Goods and/or Services over the term of any agreement.

If requested by the Company, the potential supplier must promptly provide the Company with such information or documentation as the Company reasonably requires in order to evaluate the potential supplier's financial stability.

### 13. Referees

The Company reserves the right to contact the potential supplier's referees, or any other person, directly and without notifying the potential supplier.

### 14. Conflict of interest

Potential suppliers must notify the Company immediately if any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest arises (a perceived conflict of interest is one in which a reasonable person would think that the person's judgement and/or actions are likely to be compromised, whether due to a financial or personal interest (including those of family members) in the procurement or the Company).

### 15. Inconsistencies

If there is inconsistency between any of the parts of the RFP the following order of precedence shall apply:

- (a) these Terms and Conditions;
- (b) the first page of this RFP; and
- (c) the Schedule

so that the provision in the higher ranked document will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

### 16. Collusion and Unlawful Inducements

Potential suppliers and their officers, employees, agents and advisors must not engage in any collusive, anti-competitive conduct or any other similar conduct with any other potential supplier or person or quote any unlawful inducements in relation to their proposal or the RFP process.

Potential suppliers must disclose where proposals have been compiled with the assistance of current or former the Company employees (within the previous 9 months and who was substantially involved in the design, preparation, appraisal, review, and or daily management of this activity) and should note that this may exclude their proposal from consideration.

Potential suppliers warrant that they have not provided or offered any payment, gift, item, hospitality or any other benefit to the Company, its employees, consultants, agents, subcontractors (or any other person involved in the decision-making process relating to this RFP) which could give rise to a perception of bribery or corruption in relation to the RFP or any other dealings between the parties.

### 17. Jurisdiction

This RFP shall be subject to the laws of the District of Columbia, United States of America. The language of the arbitration will be English.

The Potential Supplier and the Company will use their best efforts to settle amicably any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of, or relating to this RFP or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof. If no agreeable settlement can be found, any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of or relating to this RFP or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof, shall be settled by mediation through the American Arbitration Association by filing a request for mediation with the AAA and the other party. The Parties will be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of any such dispute.

## Company Information

Palladium is a global leader in the design, development and delivery of Positive Impact — the intentional creation of enduring social and economic value. We work with corporations, governments, foundations, investors, communities and civil society to formulate strategies and implement solutions that generate lasting social, environmental and financial benefits.

## Project Background

**Palladium International**, LLC is implementing the \$250 million, 8-year USAID CATALYZE contract which offers a facilitated partnership model that will craft solutions to crowdsource \$2 billion in blended finance (i.e., blended concessional and commercial finance) to USAID partner countries; it can work in any development sector or region.

The **CATALYZE Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) activity** aims to enhance access to low-cost and high-quality ECCE, which unlocks inclusive development, improving child outcomes, promoting women's economic empowerment, enhancing family welfare, and driving overall economic growth. Nearly 593 million children below primary school age lack access to appropriate childcare in emerging economies, constraining human capital growth. Meanwhile, women, who assume an estimated 75% of childcare responsibilities worldwide, are often unable to pursue economic opportunities given care responsibilities. As a result, 606 million women worldwide are excluded from the global labour force, with consequent impacts on productivity and economic growth.

The gap in access to high-quality ECCE results from both supply and demand-side constraints. While the public sector provides ECCE in most markets, coverage is often incomplete or poorly aligned with household needs. Non-state, including private, faith-based, philanthropically supported, and community-led ECCE are an important complement to government provided ECCE, but non-state ECCE providers are scarce in many markets. Barriers to offering non-state ECCE services include inconsistent or fragmented registration and accreditation requirements, limited access to financing, and limited profitability given substantial operating costs resulting from high caregiver-child ratios. Even when childcare providers exist, accessible options are often low-quality due to a lack of trained professionals in the field. On the demand-side, many families do not access ECCE due to high cost, low-quality provision, misalignment between existing services and their needs, and cultural norms discouraging use of childcare outside the home.

In addition to expanding equitable access to high-quality ECCE to improve learning outcomes for children and improving livelihood outcomes for women, the ECCE Family of Investments aims to build an evidence base around the most effective models and approaches for leveraging multi-stakeholder investment and innovation to reach these goals. These interventions serve as the innovation incubator aimed at providing evidence to clarify how blended finance approaches and public-private partnership models can efficiently improve outcomes for young learners and their families.

## Purpose

The ECCE LAC team seeks a MEL consultant to support the Education and ECCE MEL Teams. The ECCE MEL consultant will be a key part of the CATALYZE Education MEL and ECCE teams during the start-up period for several country-level buy-ins. The consultant will provide critical input and support for designing the MEL plans, systems and procedures that have to be in place before implementation of interventions begins. This may include developing the theory of change, results framework, implementation research approaches and evaluations of the respective buy-in. As initial the initial design, approach, and tool adaptation/development is completed, the MEL consultant will handover country level implementation to the CATALYZE Education MEL team and local implementing partners.

A complete scope of work is attached as Annex A.

## Type of Contract

Palladium intends to issue a Level of Effort Independent Consultant Agreement to the selected Consultant.

## Anticipated Contract Period of Performance and Place of Performance

This will be a remote position with the anticipated period of performance lasting from October 2023 to March 2024. The estimated LOE for this assignment is 80 days. The consultant will bill monthly for time allocated to the tasks and deliverables.

## Key Deliverables and Timeline

While this will be an LOE contract, the Consultant can expect to deliver the following outputs:

- Identification of 3-5 high quality ECCE<sup>1</sup> monitoring plans and 3-5 high quality implementation research reports (preferably from USAID-funded projects) which can be used to guide our work.
- List of recommended existing tools and adaptations for monitoring and implementation research, aligned with respective AMELPs.
- Using activity workplan, best practices and USAID guidance, define crucial areas for monitoring by country activity. These could include changes in teacher and administrator behaviors, improvements in learning and development materials, increase used of formative assessment in classrooms, increase resources from non-state actors, increased use of universal design or similar.
- Recommendations by country-level activity or overall, on how to identify and monitor participation of and change in most marginalized children. The most marginalized groups could include: children with disabilities, children with learning differences, children from language minority groups, other systemically underserved groups. It will also be important to consider intersectionality of marginalization.
- Final AMELP components (monitoring plan and implementation research) for ECCE component of Paraguay ECCE activity.
- Final AMELP (monitoring plan and implementation research) for Honduras ECCE activity.
- Draft recommendations for T4ECE AMELP (monitoring plan and implementation research).
- IRB/IRR inputs, if required.

## Instructions to Offerors

Separate technical and cost proposals must be submitted by email no later than the time and date specified on the cover page.

### 1. Technical Proposal

For the technical proposal, the offeror must submit:

- (a) Background on the consultant and relevant expertise (max 2 pages)
- (b) Past Experience Information/Capability Statement
- (c) Updated CV
- (d) Description of relevant projects previously performed by the consultant, demonstrating expertise in ECCE (max 4 pages)
- (e) Contact details for three referees (max 1 page)
- (f) All supporting documentation specified below in the pass/fail evaluation criteria.

### 2. Cost Proposal

Offerors must submit a cost proposal which consists of:

- (a) Proposed daily rate

#### Key assumptions

- Budget in USD
- All prices are to be inclusive of relevant taxes
- Offeror should budget for:

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<sup>1</sup> High quality would include: curriculum, teaching, family and community engagement, quality assurance, and budget and planning <https://www.unicef.org/education/early-childhood-education>

- Defense Base Act (DBA) insurance in accordance with FAR 52.228-3, as applicable.

**Evaluation and Award Process**

Proposals will be evaluated using a best value trade off methodology. This is a three-stage process.

- (1) The first set of criteria is graded on a pass/fail basis. Offerors must meet the following minimum eligibility qualification criteria and provide supporting documentation:

	Requirement	Supporting Documentation
(a)	Must not have any active exclusions from the working with the US government ( <a href="http://www.sam.gov">www.sam.gov</a> ), the UN (Sanctions List), or the US Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Asset Control	N/A.

- (2) If these minimum criteria are met, the offer's technical proposal will be evaluated as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Documents Evaluated	Points
Significant experience designing monitoring and implementation research on ECE, ECCE or EGR activities.	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	15
Experience building capacity of local partners on learner assessment tools and approaches to provide actionable outputs.	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	10
Experience working with MOEs and local partners.	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	10
Deep understanding of USAID structure and guidance on basic education programming, and MEL.	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	15
Experience with teacher professional development and school management monitoring.	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	10
Experience designing questionnaires and surveys for education projects	CV	10
Significant publications in the education and MEL sectors	CV	10
Familiarity with ECCE in LAC, AF and/or South Asia regions	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	5
Experience with gender and women's empowerment monitoring	CV, description of relevant projects previously performed, past experience information.	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

- (3) The offeror's cost proposal will be evaluated for:

- Proposed total price, relative to other offers received
- Realism and reasonableness of the work to be performed
- Price reflects a clear understanding of the requirements
- Price is consistent with various elements of the technical proposal
- Compliance with USAID cost principles (select one: Non profit entities – Cost Principles in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E or For profit entities – Cost Principles in FAR Part 31)

Palladium reserves the right to award under this solicitation without further negotiations. The offerors are encouraged to offer their best terms and prices with the original submission.

**PROCUREMENT INTEGRITY AND ETHICS**

It is Palladium's Policy that no gifts of any kind and of any value be exchanged between vendors/contractors and Palladium personnel. Discovery of the same will be grounds for disqualification of the vendor/contractor from participation in any Palladium's procurements and may result in disciplinary actions against Palladium personnel involved in such discovered transactions.

### **Resulting Award**

This RFP in no way obligates Palladium to award a contract. Palladium may opt to select multiple offers in response to this RFP.

Any contract/purchase order resulting from this solicitation must be signed by both parties in order to be considered valid and in force. All costs associated with, but not limited to, production, preparation and/or delivery of goods or services, including deliveries, accepted by Palladium staff, without a fully executed (signed by both parties) contract/purchase order, are at the vendor's risk only. Palladium shall not pay for any costs, without limitation, associated with production, preparation or delivery of goods and/or services under this or any other contract/purchase order, which has not been signed by both parties.

If your proposal is successful, you will be required to enter into the Company's standard contract for the types of goods or services being provided. In the provision of the Goods and Services, you will be required to comply with the Company's policies, including (without limitation) its Business Partner Code of Conduct and any relevant client terms and conditions. Potential suppliers must also comply with the Company's Business Partner Code of Conduct in the submission of any proposals pursuant to this RFP.

If you are bidding as part of a joint venture, partnership or similar, please make this clear in your submission. Likewise, if you propose to subcontract any part of the goods or services provision, then disclose this fact within your submission. The Company may require additional information from you and approval for subcontracting will not be automatic as subcontractors will be subject to Palladium's Due Diligence process.

### **Attachments**

Please review the additional documentation and proposed contracts terms and conditions which should be given consideration when preparing your proposal. By submitting your bid you will certify that that you are in agreement with the contract terms and conditions as included in this solicitation and that all prices include all aspects of the required compliance with the terms and conditions of the proposed contract.

Attachment 1- Due Diligence Questionnaire

Palladium Business Partner Code of Conduct and Child Protection Guidelines can be downloaded in full at: <http://www.thepalladiumgroup.com/policies> or request through email from [Catalyze.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:Catalyze.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com)

## Annex A: Scope of Work

### SCOPE OF WORK ECCE Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Consultant CATALYZE ECCE Family of Investments

#### A. COMPANY OVERVIEW

Palladium International LLC is a leading global consulting firm that manages nearly \$2 billion in donor-funded projects in more than 90 countries while simultaneously providing management consulting advice to private sector firms and local and national governments throughout the world. It is well-known for its work in private sector development, market systems, innovative/inclusive finance, and the formation of public-private alliances. Palladium adds value by aligning business interests with development objectives, leveraging donor resources with commercial assets, and vice versa. This market-driven approach ensures interventions are impactful, inclusive, and address the root causes of today's biggest development challenges while also being sustainable beyond the life of a particular donor-funded program.

#### B. PROJECT AND BUY-IN OVERVIEW

**Palladium International**, LLC is implementing the \$250 million, 8-year USAID CATALYZE contract which offers a facilitated partnership model that will craft solutions to crowdsource \$2 billion in blended finance (i.e., blended concessional and commercial finance) to USAID partner countries; it can work in any development sector or region.

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In addition to expanding equitable access to high-quality ECCE to improve learning outcomes for children and improving livelihood outcomes for women, the ECCE Family of Investments aims to building an evidence base around the most effective models and approaches for leveraging multi-stakeholder investment and innovation to reach these goals. These interventions serve as the innovation incubator aimed at providing evidence to clarify how blended finance approaches and public-private partnership models can efficiently improve outcomes for young learners and their families.

#### C. THE MEL CONSULTANT ROLE

The ECCE MEL consultant will be a key part of the CATALYZE Education MEL and ECCE teams during the start-up period for several country-level buy-ins. The consultant will provide critical input and support for designing the MEL plans, systems and procedures that have to be in place before implementation of interventions begins. This may include developing the theory of change, results framework, implementation research approaches and evaluations of the respective buy-in. As initial the initial design, approach, and tool adaptation/development is completed, the MEL consultant will handover country level implementation to the CATALYZE Education MEL team and local implementing partners.

## D. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The ECCE consultant would complement the work of the existing MEL team with ECCE MEL inputs and guidance on elements, including the theory of change for county-specific activities, IRs and performance indicators (with Performance Indicator Reference Sheets per ADS 201)<sup>1</sup>, and tool identification/adaptation/development per country-level activity.

Examples of tasks and responsibilities that the subcontractor/consultant can anticipate include:

- Conduct rapid desk research on best practices for ECCE monitoring and implementation research.
- In close coordination with CATALYZE MEL Specialist who leads on Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plans (AMELPs), **development the monitoring plan and the implementation research design** (under Learning Plan in the AMELP) for **ECCE components** the Paraguay ECCE and Women's Empowerment Activity.
- In close coordination with CATALYZE MEL Specialist, **develop the monitoring plan and the implementation research design** (under Learning Plan) for the Honduras ECCE AMELP
- Contribute to the monitoring plan and the implementation research (under Learning Plan) in the ECCE India AMELP.
- **Advise and provide light touch support to the CATALYZE MEL Specialist on T4ECE** (Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa) country-specific **MEL tasks**. Tasks could include monitoring plans or mini-implementation research study.
- Collaborate and coordinate with the ECCE Paraguay evaluation team.
- Lead on the adaption/development/selection of ECCE monitoring tools and guidance for ECCE-specific tool use for the India, Honduras and Paraguay ECCE activities.
- Provide inputs for IRB/IRR submission for implementation research if/as needed.

## E. DELIVERABLES

The Consultant will deliver the following outputs:

- Identification of 3-5 high quality ECCE<sup>2</sup> monitoring plans and 3-5 high quality implementation research reports (preferably from USAID-funded projects) which can be used to guide our work.
- List of recommended existing tools and adaptations for monitoring and implementation research, aligned with respective AMELPs.
- Using activity workplan, best practices and USAID guidance, define crucial areas for monitoring by country activity. These could include changes in teacher and administrator behaviors, improvements in learning and development materials, increase used of formative assessment in classrooms, increase resources from non-state actors, increased use of universal design or similar.
- Recommendations by country-level activity or overall, on how to identify and monitor participation of and change in most marginalized children. The most marginalized groups could include: children with disabilities, children with learning differences, children from language minority groups, other systemically underserved groups. It will also be important to consider intersectionality of marginalization.
- Final AMELP components (monitoring plan and implementation research) for ECCE component of Paraguay ECCE activity.
- Final AMELP (monitoring plan and implementation research) for Honduras ECCE activity.
- Draft recommendations for T4ECE AMELP (monitoring plan and implementation research).
- IRB/IRR inputs, if required.

## F. MINIMUM/PREFERRED REQUIREMENTS

The ideal candidate shall have the following qualifications and experience:

- Significant experience designing monitoring and implementation research on ECE or ECCE activities.
- Experience building capacity of local partners on ECE assessment tools and approaches to provide actionable outputs.

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<sup>2</sup> High quality would include: curriculum, teaching, family and community engagement, quality assurance, and budget and planning <https://www.unicef.org/education/early-childhood-education>

- Experience working with MOEs and local partners.
- Familiarity of USAID guidance on basic education programming, ECCE programming, and MEL.
- Experience with teacher professional development and school management monitoring.

The following qualifications and experience are preferred:

- Teaching experience
- Proficiency in Spanish
- Familiarity with ECCE in LAC, AF and/or South Asia regions
- Experience with gender and women's empowerment monitoring

#### **G. MONITORING**

The Consultant will be overseen by the acting ECCE Activity Lead. The Consultant and the supervisor will meet 2x monthly at a minimum and will often be consulting and collaborating on a daily basis.

#### **H. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY TIMING**

This will be a remote position with the anticipated period of performance lasting from October 2023 to March 2024. The estimated LOE for this assignment is 80 days. The consultant will bill monthly for time allocated to the tasks and deliverables.